

**SUMMARY OF THE
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 21, 2000**

The On-site Assessment Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Wednesday, June 21, 2000, at 1 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT). The meeting was led by its chair, Mr. William Ingersoll of the United States Navy. A list of action items resulting from this meeting is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. *The purposes of the meeting were to discuss the committee's draft position paper on the level of detail required in an on-site assessment and proposed appendix on technical training standards in preparation for the upcoming Sixth NELAC Annual (NELAC VI) meeting.*

INTRODUCTION

In addition to Dr. Margo Hunt of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Research and Development (ORD), the committee was joined by invited guests Mr. Bill Hall of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Protection and Mr. Santos Urrea of the City of Austin.

ISSUE PAPER

The committee discussed changes to their position paper on the level of detail necessary in an on-site assessment. It was suggested that it would be more appropriate to reference the paper as an issue for discussion rather than as a position paper. Some members of the committee took the general approach that although assessors should look at all tests within the laboratory's scope of accreditation, the way in which this is accomplished is an issue for discussion. It was suggested that an assessor should first look at a representative number of the bench-level procedures and then proceed further as deemed necessary based on preliminary observations. Noting that the paper is a discussion rather than a "how-to," committee members suggested the deletion from the paper of specific examples. The changes were unanimously accepted by the committee members present on the teleconference. It was agreed Mr. Wayne Davis will lead the discussion of this paper at the annual meeting and that the paper will include Mr. Ingersoll's name as a contact name for responses from NELAC stakeholders.

APPENDIX B - TECHNICAL TRAINING STANDARDS

The committee then turned its attention to Mr. Jack Hall's organization of the proposed Appendix B to the NELAC On-site Assessment Standard (Chapter 3). Its dual purpose is to provide a framework for technical training standards and to generate discussion. Mr. David Friedman provided committee members with an alternative to Mr. Hall's organization of Appendix B. He suggested that Appendix B as proposed frames the training of assessors in how to perform the technology, while his alternative proposal frames the training of assessors in how to assess the technology. It was noted that a NELAC assessment is not a forensic audit but rather an assessment of the quality management system. In discussion of the two approaches, committee members expressed the opinion that many of Mr. Friedman's points fit into the framework already constructed by Mr. Hall. There was some discussion

of the process of training an auditor to evaluate technology. The topic was deemed an issue for discussion at NELAC VI. Mr. Ingersoll noted that he had allotted considerable time for discussion at the annual meeting of the issue paper and Appendix B. In regard to technical training for assessors, he suggested that the committee is back on track as a standard-setting body. He noted that after going through the process of approving the basic training course, the committee now appreciates how much time and how many resources the process consumes. It was agreed that Mr. Hall will lead the discussion of Appendix B at the annual meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Mr. Ingersoll informed the committee that he had contacted Dr. Ken Jackson in regard to chairing a subcommittee to review the basic assessor training course materials. Dr. Jackson has consented to chair the subcommittee and will be joined by Dr. Hunt and Ms. Marlene Moore. Mr. Ingersoll encouraged interested committee members to serve on the subcommittee.

Ms. Moore noted that she has compiled many comments on the Quality Systems (QS) assessment checklist and will submit these comments to Mr. Charles Dyer. Mr. Dyer is currently working on the revision.

Mr. Friedman informed the committee that the NELAC Board of Directors (BoD) would be meeting on June 22, 2000 with Dr. Norine Noonan, Assistant Administrator of EPA ORD, and Dr. Wilson Hershey, Chair of the Environmental Laboratory Advisory Board (ELAB), to discuss the future of NELAC.

The committee discussed their teleconference schedule for the next six months and decided to maintain a biweekly Wednesday teleconference schedule. The following teleconference dates were tentatively set, pending coordination with the EPA teleconferencing system: July 12, July 26, August 9, August 23, September 6, September 20, October 4, and October 18. Mr. Ingersoll will contact EPA to request these teleconference dates.

CONCLUSION

The allotted time for the teleconference having expired, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m. EDT. The committee's next meeting will be a face-to-face meeting at the sixth annual meeting of NELAC in Williamsburg, Virginia.

**ACTION ITEMS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 21, 2000**

Item No.	Action	Responsible Member	Date to be Completed
1.	Committee to develop a teleconference schedule extending beyond June 21, 2000.	All	Complete
2.	Mr. Ingersoll to contact EPA to finalize committee teleconference schedule.	W. Ingersoll	Complete
3.	Committee to submit comments on QS assessment checklist to Mr. Dyer.	M. Moore	
4.	Committee to revise/update QS checklist.	C. Dyer	

**PARTICIPANTS
ON-SITE ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
JUNE 21, 2000**

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